Mac Flecknoe.

ALL humane things are subject to decay, [boy:
And, when Fate summons, Monarchs muſt o-
This *Fletnoe* found, who, like *Auguſtus*, young
Was call'd to Empire, and had govern'd long:
In Proſe and Verſe, was own'd, without diſpute
Through all the Realms of *Non-ſenſe*, abſolute.
This aged Prince now flourißing in Peace,
And bleſt with iſſue of a large increaſe.
Worn out with buſineſs, did at length debate
To ſettle the Succeſſion of the State:
And pond'ring which of all his Sons was fit
To Reign, and wage Immortal War with Wit:
Cry'd, 'tis reſolv'd; for Nature pleads that He
Should onely rule, who moſt reſembles me.
Sh——alone my perfect image bears,
Nature in dulneſs from his tender years.
Sh——alone of all my Sons, is he
Who ſtands confirm'd in full ſtupidity.
The reſt to ſome faint meaning make pretence,
But *Sh*——never deviates into ſenſe.
Some Beams of Wit on other ſouls may fall,
Strike through and make a lucid interval;
But *Sh*——'s genuine night admits no ray,
His riſing Fogs prevail upon the Day:

Beſides his goodly Fabrick fills the eye,
And ſeems deſign'd for thoughtleſs Majeſty:
Thoughtleſs as Monarch Oakes, that ſhade the plain,
And, ſpread in ſolemn ſtate, ſupinely reign.
Heywood and *Sherley* were but Types of thee,
Thou laſt great Prophet of Tautology:
Even I, a dunce of more renown than they,
Was ſent before but to prepare thy way:
And courſly clad in *Norwich* Drugget came
To teach the Nations in thy greater name.
My warbling Lute, the Lute I whilom ſtrung
When to King *John* of *Portugal* I ſung,
Was but the prelude to that glorious day,
When thou on ſilver *Thames* did'ſt cut thy way,
With well tim'd Oars before the Royal Barge,
Swell'd with the Pride of thy Celeſtial charge;
And big with Hymn, Commander of an Hoſt,
The like was ne'er in *Epſom* Blankets toſt.
Methinks I ſee the new *Arion* Sail,
The Lute ſtill trembling underneath thy nail.
At thy well ſharpned thumb from Shore to Shore
The Treble ſqueaks for fear, the Baſes roar:
Echoes from *Piſſing-Ally*, *Sh---* call,
And *Sh---* they reſound from *A---- Hall*.
About thy boat the little Fiſhes throng,
As at the Morning Toaſt, that Floats along.
Sometimes as Prince of thy Harmonious band
Thou weild'ſt thy Papers in thy threſhing hand.

St.

St. *Andre*'s feet ne'er kept more equal time,
Not ev'n the feet of thy own *Pſyche*'s rhime:
Though they in number as in ſenſe excell;
So juſt, ſo like tautology they fell,
That, pale with envy, *Singleton* forſwore
The Lute and Sword which he in Triumph bore,
And vow'd he ne'er would act *Villerius* more.
Here ſtopt the good old *Syre*, and wept for joy
In ſilent raptures of the hopefull boy.
All Arguments, but moſt his Plays, perſwade,
That for anointed dulneſs he was made.

Cloſe to the Walls which fair *Auguſta* bind,
(The fair *Auguſta* much to fears inclin'd)
An ancient fabrick, rais'd t' inform the ſight,
There ſtood of yore, and *Barbican* it hight:
A watch Tower once; but now, ſo Fate ordains,
Of all the Pile an empty name remains.
From its old Ruins Brothel-houſes riſe,
Scenes of lewd loves, and of polluted joys.
Where their vaſt Courts the Mother-Strumpets keep,
And, undiſturb'd by Watch, in ſilence ſleep.
Near theſe a Nurſery erects its head,
Where Queens are form'd, and future Hero's bred;
Where unfledg'd Actors learn to laugh and cry,
Where infant Punks their tender Voices try,
And little *Maximins* the Gods defy.
Great *Fletcher* never treads in Buſkins here,
Nor greater *Johnſon* dares in Socks appear.

But gentle *Simkin* just reception finds
Amidst this Monument of vanisht minds:
Pure Clinches, the suburbian Muse affords;
And *Panton* waging harmless War with words.
Here *Flecknoe*, as a place to Fame well known,
Ambitiously design'd his *Sh*——'s Throne.
For ancient *Decker* prophesi'd long since,
That in this Pile should Reign a mighty Prince,
Born for a scourge of Wit, and flayle of Sense:
To whom true dulness should some *Psyches* owe,
But Worlds of *Misers* from his pen should flow;
Humorists and *Hypocrites* it should produce,
Whole *Raymond* Families, and Tribes of *Bruce*.

Now Empress *Fame* had publisht the renown,
Of *Sh*——'s Coronation through the Town.
Rows'd by report of Fame, the Nations meet,
From near *Bun-Hill*, and distant *Watling-street*.
No *Persian* Carpets spread th' Imperial way,
But scatter'd Limbs of mangled Poets lay:
From dusty shops neglected Authors come,
Martyrs of Pies, and Reliques of the Bum.
Much *Heywood*, *Shirly*, *Ogleby* there lay,
But loads of *Sh*—— almost choakt the way.
Bilk't *Stationers* for Yeomen stood prepar'd,
And *H*—— was Captain of the Guard.
The hoary Prince in Majesty appear'd,
High on a Throne of his own Labours rear'd.

At his right hand our young *Aſcanius* ſate
Rome's other hope, and Pillar of the State.
His Brows thick fogs, inſtead of glories, grace,
And lambent dulneſs play'd around his face.
As *Hannibal* did to the Altars come,
Swore by his *Syre* a mortal Foe to *Rome*;
So *Sh*---- ſwore, nor ſhould his Vow be vain,
That he till Death true dulneſs would maintain;
And in his father's Right, and Realms defence,
Ne'er to have peace with Wit, nor truce with Senſe.
The King himſelf the ſacred Unction made,
As King by Office, and as Prieſt by Trade:
In his ſiniſter hand, inſtead of Ball,
He plac'd a mighty Mug of potent Ale;
Love's Kingdom to his right he did convey,
At once his Sceptre and his rule of Sway; [young,
Whoſe righteous Lore the Prince had practis'd
And from whoſe Loyns recorded *Pſyche* ſprung.
His Temples laſt with Poppies were o'erſpread,
That nodding ſeem'd to conſecrate his head:
Juſt at that point of time, if Fame not lye,
On his left hand twelve reverend *Owls* did fly.
So *Romulus*, 'tis ſung, by *Tyber*'s Brook,
Preſage of Sway from twice ſix Vultures took.
Th' admiring throng loud acclamations make,
And Omens of his future Empire take.
The *Syre* then ſhook the honours of his head,
And from his brows damps of oblivion ſhed

Full

Full on the filial dulneſs: long he ſtood,
Repelling from his Breaſt the raging God;
At length burſt out in this prophetick mood:
Heavens bleſs my Son, from *Ireland* let him reign
To far *Barbadoes* on the Weſtern main;
Of his Dominion may no end be known,
And greater than his Father's be his Throne.
Beyond loves Kingdom let him ſtretch his Pen;
He paus'd, and all the people cry'd *Amen*.
Then thus, continu'd he, my Son advance
Still in new Impudence, new Ignorance.
Succeſs let others teach, learn thou from me
Pangs without birth, and fruitleſs Induſtry.
Let *Virtuoſo's* in five years be writ;
Yet not one thought accuſe thy toyl of Wit.
Let gentle *George* in triumph tread the Stage,
Make *Dorimant* betray, and *Loveit* rage;
Let *Cully*, *Cockwood*, *Fopling*, charm the Pit,
And in their folly ſhew the Writers wit.
Yet ſtill thy fools ſhall ſtand in thy defence,
And juſtifie their Author's want of ſenſe.
Let 'em be all by thy own model made
Of dulneſs, and deſire no foreign aid:
That they to future ages may be known,
Not Copies drawn, but iſſue of thy own.
Nay let thy men of wit too be the ſame,
All full of thee, and differing but in name;

But let no alien *S--dl--y* interpoſe
To lard with wit thy hungry *Epſom* proſe.
And when falſe flowers of *Rhethorick* thou would'ſt
Truſt Nature, do not labour to be dull; [cull,
But write thy beſt, and top; and in each line,
Sir *Formal's* oratory will be thine.
Sir *Formal*, though unſought, attends thy quill,
And does thy *Northern Dedications* fill.
Nor let falſe friends ſeduce thy mind to fame,
By arrogating *Johnſon's* Hoſtile name.
Let Father *Flecnoe* fire thy mind with praiſe,
And Uncle *Ogleby* thy envy raiſe.
Thou art my blood, where *Johnſon* has no part;
What ſhare have we in Nature or in Art?
Where did his wit on learning fix a brand,
And rail at Arts he did not underſtand?
Where made he love in Prince *Nicander's* vein,
Or ſwept the duſt in *Pſyche's* humble ſtrain?
Where ſold he Bargains, Whip-ſtich, kiſs my Arſe,
Promis'd a Play and dwinled to a Farce?
When did his Muſe from *Fletcher* ſcenes purloin,
As thou whole *Eth'ridg* doſt transfuſe to thine?
But ſo transfus'd as Oyl on Waters flow,
His always floats above, thine ſinks below.
This is thy Province, this thy wondrous way,
New Humours to invent for each new Play:
This is that boaſted Byas of thy mind,
By which one way, to dulneſs, 'tis inclin'd.

Which

Which makes thy writings lean on one ſide ſtill,
And in all changes that way bends thy will.
Nor let thy mountain belly make pretence
Of likeneſs; thine's a tympany of ſenſe.
A Tun of Man in thy large Bulk is writ,
But ſure thou'rt but a Kilderkin of wit.
Like mine thy gentle numbers feebly creep,
Thy Tragick Muſe gives ſmiles, thy Comick ſleep.
With whate'er gall thou ſett'ſt thy ſelf to write,
Thy inoffenſive Satyrs never bite.
In thy fellonious heart, though Venom lies,
It does but touch thy *Iriſh* pen, and dyes.
Thy Genius calls thee not to purchaſe fame
In keen Iambicks, but mild Anagram:
Leave writing Plays, and chuſe for thy command
Some peacefull Province in Acroſtick Land.
There thou may'ſt wings diſplay and Altars raiſe,
And torture one poor word Ten thouſand ways.
Or if thou would'ſt thy diff'rent talents ſuit,
Set thy own Songs, and ſing them to thy lute.
He ſaid, but his laſt words were ſcarcely heard,
For *Bruce* and *Longvil* had a *Trap* prepar'd,
And down they ſent thee yet declaiming Bard.
Sinking he left his Drugget robe behind,
Born upwards by a Subterranean wind.
The Mantle fell to the young Prophet's part,
With double portion of his Father's Art.

ABSA-